



Municipal League Publishes Review of Metro Transit



The League convened a committee of citizens to review Metro Transit and recently published its report. The review found several areas in need of improvement and rethinking.

Many routes are experiencing overloads, poor schedule performance and frustrated riders. Metro is at the limit of what it can raise through its currently authorized taxes. Citizens and policy makers need to see evidence of cost-effectiveness and transparency before they might consider new funding sources.

Particularly in this economic climate, Metro must challenge itself to meet the pressures of declining revenues and greater demand for service in new ways. The agency needs to squeeze every ounce of productivity and service out of limited resources.

The League's report made recommendations around four findings.

Finding #1: Performance Measurement and Reporting

Metro publishes few performance measures and no long-term trends. While the agency uses performance data in its service planning, it needs to apply systematic published standards in a transparent way.

Finding #2: Service Allocation Policy

King County Metro allocates new transit service based on a conception of equity and area coverage that isn't built on ridership demand, service needs or cost effectiveness. In the current environment of budget shortfalls, rapid growth in ridership and deteriorating service performance, this policy is untenable. Service should be targeted at activity centers, corridors, the type of demand and the best mode for each. King County policy makers need to revisit the current allocation policy. It should be a priority to manage the system cost-effectively and according to meaningful transit characteristics and growth management objectives.

Finding #3: Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2007-2016

The Strategic Plan for Public Transportation and its priorities urgently need to be revisited. The strategies for delivering service in particular are too numerous and too vague. The plan needs a much sharper focus on a back-to-basics approach: set clear priorities to fix service problems first, then allocate service to follow demand and growth-management goals. Monitoring and service planning should be clearly aligned with service standards. Financial strategies should be added to address cost control, efficient use of resources and prudent use of debt financing for capital facilities.

Finding #4: Clarity and Transparency

King County Metro lacks clarity, accessibility and transparency in its public information. A lack of performance measures and clear standards make for opaqueness in the decision process. Routine performance and management reports aren't easily available. The Metro Web site is difficult to navigate and even basic information is hard to find. Routine public information about agency meetings, budgets and performance isn't readily available.

To read the full report, see www.munileague.org.

Upcoming Events

December 2, 2008: Forum on Alaskan Way Viaduct Solution

December 4, 2008: Member Breakfast Forum

March 25, 2009: 50th Annual Civic Awards

View from the Chair

As we enter the last month of 2008, we should be proud of the tremendous progress the Municipal League has made this year. Consider some of our accomplishments:

- Candidate ratings went directly to voters for the first time, mailed before the primary election to 76,000 households across King County.
- A successful candidate evaluation committee met in the south end for the first time in five years.
- The most successful Civic Awards in memory.
- A new Web site that is attracting record traffic.
- Four issues of *MuniNews* for the first time in five years and a revamped *eNews* to reach more people by email.
- The number of individual paid members nearly doubled and we launched a breakfast forum as a membership benefit.



Municipal League Chair
Brad Meacham

In addition, we just published a report with concrete recommendations to improve Metro Transit and we're launching an effort to push for the best solution to replace the Viaduct. A public forum is set for December 2 and we will weigh in with our position shortly thereafter.

Of course we have a lot more work to do in order to fulfill our mission as a truly countywide organization that effectively promotes better government. For one thing, we need the resources to send our ratings and ballot recommendations to voters for next year's general election.

We believe in good government solutions and "outstanding" public officials and we need to reach more people in order to have a more meaningful impact in the community.

Our region needs the League now more than ever. That's why I urge you to sign up your friends and colleagues as members – *and remember that League memberships make great gifts!*

As always, let me know what you think. Send your thoughts to chair@munileague.org.

Thank You Outgoing Board Members

The League thanks six trustees who will be leaving the board at the end of the year after serving two full terms:

- **Jill Bowman.** Jill served as chair of the Issues Committee.
- **Bruce Carter.** Bruce served as board chair in 2007 and is currently chairing the League's Port Study Committee.
- **Sandra Driscoll.** Sandra served as League treasurer and chair of the Operations Committee.
- **Norma Jean Hanson.** Norma Jean served as League secretary.
- **Bob Klein.** Bob served as League vice chair and chair of the Transportation Committee. He will continue as President of the Municipal League Foundation.
- **Wes Uhlman.** As a former mayor of Seattle, Wes provided invaluable support for the League.

The League acknowledges each of them for their League board service and continuing commitment to better government.

League Works for Viaduct Solution



It's time to rally around a plan to solve the problem of the Alaskan Way Viaduct. The League is taking on the issue just as it's about to explode into public attention again.

Since the public vote in February 2007 on tunnel and rebuild options led to a stalemate on the issue, an appointed 30-member stakeholders group has been studying alternatives and working on guidelines to narrow the choices, looking at criteria such as mobility, cost and the economic, environmental and civic impact. Governor Gregoire, Executive Sims and Mayor Nickels have said they want to make a final decision by the end of the year.

The Viaduct issue is important because the public decision will affect the region for generations. The League is forming a subcommittee to weigh in and will convene a public forum on December 2, 2008 to bring together stakeholders and the public.

This forum will cut through the many choices to focus on results: Which option can be implemented fastest? Which option has the best long-term cost benefit? How do we best keep people and freight moving? What's the best solution for the future of Seattle and the region?

Forum panelists include Grace Crunican, Seattle Department of Transportation; Patrick Gordon, Chair, Downtown Seattle Association; Cary Moon, People's Waterfront Coalition; and Dave Freiboth, King County Labor Council. For more information, see www.munileague.org.

2008 Election Wrap Up

This was an exciting and historic year with an unprecedented number of people participating. The League and its volunteers were excited to be part of it by providing information and recommendations to the voters of King County.

Some key local races were highlighted in the September issue of MuniNews. Here are a few updates.

In the judicial races on the general ballot, Tim Bradshaw (rated "very good") beat Suzanne Parisian (rated "very good"), Holly Hill (rated "outstanding") beat Julia Garrett (rated "outstanding") and Barbara Mack (rated "very good") beat Jean Rietschel (rated "outstanding").

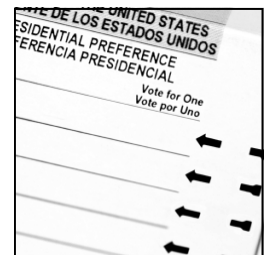
In the race for representative in the 5th Legislative District, Democrat David Spring (rated "very good") received nearly as many votes as incumbent Republican Glenn Anderson (rated "good") in the August primary. In the general election, Representative Anderson won reelection.

Democrats faced off in two open races in North Seattle. In the 36th District (Ballard, Magnolia, Queen Anne), businessman Reuven Carlyle (rated "outstanding") prevailed over John Burbank (rated "good"). In the 46th District (Greenwood, Northgate, Lake City), King County employee Scott White (rated "good") defeated environmental activist Gerry Pollet (rated "good").

In the 41st District (Mercer Island, Bellevue, Newcastle), a representative seat was opened by Fred Jarrett (rated "outstanding"), who successfully ran to represent the district in the Senate. Democrat Marcie Maxwell (rated "good") beat Republican Steve Litzow (rated "very good") to fill the seat.

In the 45th District (Kirkland, Woodinville, Duvall), incumbent Democrat Roger Goodman (rated "good") held on to his seat in a close contest with former Republican legislator Toby Nixon (rated "outstanding").

A printable summary card with the outcomes of all the races the League rated can be downloaded at www.munileague.org.



Next Member Breakfast Forum

Join the League and a panel of political pundits to review local election results and preview the upcoming Elections Director race.

Thursday, December 4, 2008, 7:30 – 9:00 a.m.
Law Offices of Davis Wright Tremaine
1201 Third Avenue, Suite 2200, Seattle

Free for members, \$10 for guests at the door.
Please RSVP at 206-622-8333 or admin@munileague.org

Thank You to League Advisors

Members of the League's Advisory Board joined us at a reception on November 11 at Davis Wright Tremaine, taking advantage of the opportunity for input into the future of the League.

We look forward to hearing from those who couldn't attend and are always open to suggestions.

Municipal League of King County
810 Third Ave, Suite 224
Seattle, WA 98104

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Seattle, WA
Permit No. 5025

SUPPORT THE LEAGUE!
VISIT WWW.MUNILEAGUE.ORG AND CONTRIBUTE TODAY



Municipal League Board Members

Jill D. Bowman	Norma Jean Hanson	Bradley Meacham	Wes Uhlman
Bruce Carter	Albert Israel	Gabe Meyer	Nick S. Verwolf
Sandra Driscoll	Chris Johnson	Kristin Peterson	Rodney G. Wendt
Kathy Elias	Robert Klein	Ramsey Ramerman	Nick Williamson
Mary Gates	Cynara Lilly	R. Todd Slind	Kendee Yamaguchi

Municipal League Foundation Board Members

Jill D. Bowman	Sandra Driscoll	Robert Klein	Steve Marshall
Bruce Carter	Norma Jean Hanson	Bradley Meacham	Kristin Peterson

810 Third Ave, Suite 224
Seattle, WA 98104

206-622-8333 phone
425-671-0506 fax
admin@munileague.org
www.munileague.org

About the Municipal League

The Municipal League of King County is a nonpartisan volunteer organization that has worked to ensure good government that is open, effective and accountable since 1910. The Municipal League is dedicated to improving the caliber of public officials and the quality of public decisions.

For more information see www.munileague.org.